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CURRENT TREND IN WORLD MEAT CONSUMPTION

The total world supply of meat during 1950 exceeded the 1934-38 prewar average, but the general pattern of production and per capita meat consumption by countries is unlike that of the prewar period. Production in North and South America and Oceania (Australia and New Zealand) has surpassed the prewar level, but output is below prewar in Europe. Accordingly, strong domestic demand coupled with increased supplies of meat have enabled the United States, Canada, Argentina, Uruguay and many other countries in the Western Hemisphere to enjoy a per capita consumption of meat substantially in excess of the prewar average. In many cases, exportable surpluses from traditional exporting countries in the Western Hemisphere have been sharply limited.

MEAT 1/: Summary of production, net trade and available supplies in specified areas in 1950, with comparison.

Continent or Area	Production		Net trade :(+) imports, (-) exports:		Available Supplies	
	Prewar	1950	Prewar	1950	Prewar	1950
	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds
North America <u>2</u> /	18,606	25,449	-99	+102	18,638	24,892
Europe <u>3</u> /	26,827	4/22,190	+2,989	4/+2,477	29,785	4/24,595
South America <u>5</u> /	7,845	9,446	-2,032	-1,355	5,813	7,964
Union of South Africa	671	947	+6	-6	677	941
Oceania	3,226	3,492	-1,121	-1,321	2,104	2,171
Total, above	57,175	61,524	-257	-103	57,017	60,563

1/ Carcass meat - excludes edible offal, lard, rabbit and poultry meat.

2/ Includes Canada, Mexico, United States and Cuba. 3/ Includes the 21 countries shown in the following table. 4/Not strictly comparable with prewar, due to territorial changes. 5/Includes Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay.

MEAT 1/: Production, net trade, and consumption, prewar average, 1949 and 1950

Countries	Production		Net trade		Exports		Apparent consumption		Per capita consumption			
	Prewar 2/	1949	1950	Prewar 2/	1949	1950	Prewar 2/	1949	1950	In pounds		In percent of prewar
	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Percent
Canada.....	1,417	1,945	1,916	169	169	-	1,244	1,801	1,778	113	133	118
Mexico.....	698	1,023	1,013	1	127	-	699	896	971	38	37	97
United States.....	16,182	21,710	22,109	65	145	281	16,382	21,378	21,710	126	144	114
Cuba.....	309	414	411	4	22	22	313	436	433	77	84	109
Austria.....	617	400	530	12	24	11	629	424	541	92	61	66
Belgium.....	693	536	713	48	96	1	741	732	726	89	85	96
Bulgaria 3/.....	337	-	-	5	-	-	332	-	-	54	-	-
Czechoslovakia.....	1,032	735	-	5	55	-	1,037	790	-	72	63	88
Denmark 4/.....	1,105	897	1,120	572	328	589	504	544	531	134	129	96
Finland.....	256	258	251	5	12	2	251	246	249	66	62	94
France.....	4,015	2,555	4,334	47	9	60	4,062	4,246	4,274	97	102	105
Germany - Western 5/.....	7,471	2,588	3,596	150	194	271	7,621	2,782	3,867	113	59	52
Greece.....	208	144	138	47	54	31	255	198	169	36	25	69
Hungary.....	635	-	18	18	-	-	617	-	-	69	-	-
Ireland.....	336	311	322	71	51	80	265	260	242	90	87	97
Italy.....	1,490	1,440	1,480	115	52	39	1,605	1,492	1,519	38	32	84
Netherlands.....	888	593	887	64	44	56	824	596	768	89	60	67
Norway.....	223	203	240	2	9	6/	225	212	240	78	64	82
Poland 3/.....	1,598	-	-	100	-	-	1,498	-	-	44	-	-
Portugal.....	290	355	345	6/	1	2	290	354	347	43	42	98
Rumania 3/.....	825	-	-	6	-	-	819	-	-	42	-	-
Sweden.....	649	651	672	16	31	47	633	663	698	101	95	94
Switzerland.....	419	371	406	17	12	14	436	387	420	105	83	79
United Kingdom.....	2,852	2,097	2,631	3,422	2,611	2,967	6,272	4,708	5,598	124	93	75
Yugoslavia.....	888	-	-	19	-	-	869	-	-	57	-	-
Soviet Union 3/.....	7,292	-	-	3	-	-	7,295	-	-	44	-	-
Argentina.....	4,330	5,289	5,074	1,460	1,161	974	2,870	4,001	3,963	215	240	112
Brazil 7/.....	2,214	2,857	2,947	211	94	66	2,003	2,763	2,881	53	57	108
Chile.....	349	374	397	21	2	3	328	372	394	73	65	89
Paraguay 8/.....	167	198	193	16	31	18	151	167	185	165	128	78
Uruguay.....	785	845	835	324	296	294	461	549	541	225	236	105
Union of South Africa.....	671	954	947	6	10	6	677	964	941	70	80	114
Australia.....	2,202	2,357	2,246	521	561	494	1,680	1,796	1,752	245	230	94
New Zealand 9/.....	1,024	1,198	1,246	600	789	827	424	409	417	212	219	103

Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations. Prepared or estimated from official statistics, United States foreign service reports, and other information. Data relate to present boundaries unless otherwise noted.

1/ Carcass meat - excludes edible offal, lard, rabbit, and poultry meat. 2/ Prewar averages are for years 1935-39 for United States, Canada, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland and Sweden, 1936-38 for Greece, Rumania, United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, 1936 for the Soviet Union, and 1934-38 principally for others. 3/ Prewar territory. 4/ Includes carcass meat equivalent of live animal exports. 5/ Prewar averages include prewar territory. 6/ Less than 500,000 pounds. 7/ Excludes farm production and consumption. 8/ Beef and veal only. 9/ Year ending September 30.

On a world basis, stocks are normally small and relatively unimportant in a perishable commodity like meat. It is exceedingly difficult to stockpile large supplies of meat for an appreciable period.

Consumption of meat in Europe on a per capita basis increased slightly during 1950 when compared with 1949, but remained below prewar levels in all countries except France. As a whole, not only have net imports continued below prewar, but total meat production is under the prewar level. Nevertheless, many European countries which imported large quantities of meat in postwar years have now increased domestic production to gain self-sufficiency. In some cases, these countries have started modest export programs. Considering increases in human population and a general shortage of livestock feed in Europe, the prewar per capita meat consumption level may not be reached for some time. Rationing has been eliminated in most countries, but continues in the United Kingdom and in many Iron Curtain countries.

There is conclusive evidence that the pattern of meat consumption has been altered in the past decade. Rationing and price control during the war period tended to distribute more equally available meat supplies. Consequently, many people in the relatively lower income groups developed a taste for meat. This factor created a greater demand for meat in postwar years. It is also true that during the early postwar years when supplies of other consumer goods were restricted, an even higher proportion of consumer incomes was available for meat.

Per capita consumption in the United Kingdom was estimated at roughly 110 pounds in 1950. This is a substantial increase when compared with 1949, but is still below prewar. A substantial rise in the domestic meat output in the United Kingdom coupled with an increase in liftings from Denmark, Australia, New Zealand, France, and Poland contributed to offset the decline in exports from Argentina. The outlook is for an improvement in the level of meat consumption as a result of the new agreement with Argentina and the increased domestic output. However, a fundamental problem remains with regard to reaching prewar consumption levels in view of the apparent difficulties that Argentina, Australia and other countries are having in exporting at prewar rates. With this in mind, the British Government has been emphasizing greater domestic meat production.

In North America, consumption of meat in 1950 was substantially above prewar levels. Demand for meat continued firm notwithstanding the fact that prices generally increased. Per capita consumption of meat in 1951 probably will not differ much in total from 1950. In the United States, more cattle are being added to herd inventories at the expense of current beef output, but pork consumption may be greater in 1951. Per capita consumption of meat in the United States for 1950 was estimated to have been close to 144 pounds. This is on a par with 1949, but below the near record year of 1947 when meat consumption in the United States was estimated close to 155 pounds per person. The outlook for 1951 is for a slight decline from the 1950 level.

Per capita meat consumption in the important meat exporting countries of Argentina and Uruguay declined slightly in 1950 as compared with 1949. Human population increases which were stimulated by immigration in postwar years, plus a severe drought in late 1949 and 1950, reduced meat output and seriously curtailed the exportable surplus of beef. Per capita consumption in Argentina and Uruguay is estimated at around 232 and 230 pounds, respectively--the highest in the world. In an effort to increase supplies of meat for export, the Government of Argentina has attempted to reduce the per capita disappearance.

In Oceania per capita meat consumption has tended to decline slightly. Consumption is above prewar levels in New Zealand, but below in Australia. According to available data, New Zealand has expanded meat production to keep pace with the human increment, while per capita meat consumption in Australia has tended to lag somewhat in postwar years. Per capita consumption of meat in the Union of South Africa during 1950 was estimated to have been around 9 percent above prewar.

Because of larger livestock populations on farms and ranches, the prospects appear favorable for a continued rise in world meat production. However, a greater per capita meat consumption may be limited by increases in the human population. Meat output will be contingent upon the extent to which livestock holdings might have to be reduced or could be increased in keeping with the available feed supply. Demand will continue strong. Based on current information it is likely that the 1950 world meat production level will be surpassed in 1951.

By George J. Dietz, based in part on U. S. Foreign Service reports.

MEAT 1/: Per capita consumption in specified countries,
prewar and annual 1946-1950.

Country	: Prewar : 2/	: 1946 :	: 1947 :	: 1948 :	: 1949 :	: 1950 :
	: Pounds :	: Pounds :	: Pounds :	: Pounds :	: Pounds :	: Pounds :
Canada	: 113 :	: 140 :	: 139 :	: 129 :	: 133 :	: 129 :
Mexico	: 38 :	: 40 :	: 38 :	: 41 :	: 37 :	: 38 :
United States	: 126 :	: 153 :	: 155 :	: 145 :	: 144 :	: 144 :
Cuba	: 77 :	: 83 :	: 89 :	: 88 :	: 84 :	: 81 :
Austria	: 92 :	: 55 :	: 60 :	: 61 :	: 61 :	: 77 :
Belgium	: 89 :	: 90 :	: 86 :	: 83 :	: 85 :	: 84 :
Bulgaria	: <u>3/</u> 54 :	: - :	: - :	: - :	: - :	: - :
Czechoslovakia	: 72 :	: 61 :	: 93 :	: 60 :	: 63 :	: - :
Denmark <u>4/</u>	: 134 :	: 137 :	: 139 :	: 120 :	: 129 :	: 124 :
Finland	: 66 :	: 45 :	: 55 :	: 58 :	: 62 :	: 62 :
France	: 97 :	: 76 :	: 80 :	: 92 :	: 102 :	: 102 :
Germany, Western	: <u>3/</u> 113 :	: - :	: - :	: - :	: 59 :	: 81 :
Greece	: 36 :	: 27 :	: 27 :	: 27 :	: 25 :	: 21 :
Hungary	: 69 :	: - :	: - :	: - :	: - :	: - :
Ireland	: 90 :	: 104 :	: 108 :	: 92 :	: 87 :	: 81 :
Italy	: 38 :	: 27 :	: 26 :	: 31 :	: 32 :	: 33 :
Netherlands	: 89 :	: 50 :	: 52 :	: 49 :	: 60 :	: 76 :
Norway	: 78 :	: 51 :	: 59 :	: 51 :	: 64 :	: 73 :
Poland	: <u>3/</u> 44 :	: - :	: - :	: - :	: - :	: - :
Portugal	: 43 :	: 30 :	: 35 :	: 41 :	: 42 :	: 40 :
Rumania	: <u>3/</u> 42 :	: - :	: - :	: - :	: - :	: - :
Sweden	: 101 :	: 97 :	: 97 :	: 91 :	: 95 :	: 99 :
Switzerland	: 105 :	: 67 :	: 80 :	: 76 :	: 83 :	: 89 :
United Kingdom	: 124 :	: 109 :	: 103 :	: 88 :	: 93 :	: 110 :
Yugoslavia	: 57 :	: - :	: - :	: - :	: - :	: - :
Soviet Union	: <u>3/</u> 44 :	: - :	: - :	: - :	: - :	: - :
Argentina	: 215 :	: 224 :	: 230 :	: 232 :	: 240 :	: 232 :
Brazil	: 53 :	: 49 :	: 51 :	: 54 :	: 57 :	: 58 :
Chile	: 73 :	: 77 :	: 75 :	: 74 :	: 65 :	: 67 :
Paraguay <u>5/</u>	: 165 :	: 143 :	: 167 :	: 186 :	: 128 :	: 125 :
Uruguay	: 225 :	: 199 :	: 206 :	: 226 :	: 236 :	: 230 :
Union of So. Africa	: 70 :	: 78 :	: 77 :	: 82 :	: 80 :	: 76 :
Australia	: 245 :	: 191 :	: 199 :	: 220 :	: 230 :	: 214 :
New Zealand	: 219 :	: 219 :	: 200 :	: 199 :	: 219 :	: 219 :

1/ Carcass meat basis - includes beef and veal, pork, mutton and lamb, goat and horse meat; excludes edible offal and lard. 2/ Prewar average is for years 1935-39 for United States, Canada, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland and Sweden, 1936-38 for Greece, Rumania, Australia, New Zealand and United Kingdom, 1936 for Czechoslovakia, and 1934-38 principally for others. 3/ Prewar territory. 4/ Includes carcass meat equivalent of live animal exports. 5/ Beef and veal only.

MEAT* PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION PER CAPITA

SPECIFIED COUNTRIES; PREWAR AND 1950

